

or ch'i means god. Literally it means sky god. This idea is closely 776
related to that of T'ien 天, meaning sky, God of the Sky or Heaven,
of the Chou dynasty Chinese, and it must be remembered that the
Ch'iang lived close enough to the Chou about 1121 B. C. to unite
with them in the conquest of the Shang.¹ At present many of the
Ch'iang identify Mu Bya Sei with Yu Huang Shang Ti 玉皇上帝, the
highest god of the Taoists, and also with the Christian God. Mu Bya
Sei is the greatest of all gods, is righteous and pure, controls every-
thing everywhere in heaven and on earth, requires righteousness
among men, protects men and domestic animals, gives rain and
good crops, and helps people secure children and a numerous
posterity.

The supreme god is worshipped near sacred white quartz 778
stones, called in different localities lu sha, lu ts'a, 776
lo pi etc. Its whiteness symbolizes the purity and righte- 823
ousness of the god. The white stone is sacred and holy, and near
it communion with the god is natural and easy. Not every white
quartz stone is sacred. It must be the right shape, somewhat point-
ed at the top and with a wide base on which it can stand upright.
The sacred white stone has superhuman power, and for this reason
it is placed on top of graves, and on walls in front of doors to keep
demons from entering the house. Generally the sacred white stone
is not identified with Mu Bya Sei, but we have met some individuals
who have affirmed that the white stone is Mu Bya Sei. The use of
sacred white stones is widespread in Si K'eng, eastern Tibet, and
among the tribespeople of western Szechwan.

The sacred white stone is used as a place of worship on the top
of every house, at the rear and in the center, on the highest point of
the back wall. Below it is a small platform and a hole for burning
incense. Here Mu Bya Sei is worshipped by the men of the house-
hold. Another sacred white stone is found in the temple in or near
the sacred grove, and still another on the shrine near the sacred tree
or trees in the sacred grove.

A second god is Abba Mula(a-ba-ma-la-), mo lo sei (mo-lo- 776
sei) or abba mo lo sei. Near Tung Men Wai, Lung Ch'i Chai, and
Mu Shang Chai he is sometimes called Ndjei Tsu or Nyei Su.
No priest is without this god, for without it he would be powerless.
It is his patron or guardian deity and instructor. This god consists
of the skull of a golden-haired monkey wrapped into a round bundle
in sheets of white paper. Inside are also dried pieces of a golden-